

# LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



## LOUISIANA WORKPLACES RESPOND TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**AN IN-HOUSE EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

### Participant Manual

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
CHARLES C. FOTI, JR.

## Message from Attorney General Charles C. Foti, Jr.

The Attorney General's office realizes that domestic abuse victimizes all aspects of our society. Not only does the immediate victim suffer, but so do our children, our schools, our health facilities, our court systems, our businesses, our communities and we as individuals. Billions of dollars are spent annually on legal, health, and welfare services as a result of domestic violence. By our silence or ignorance we condone it, and the cost to our community in terms of economics and safety is enormous. Clearly domestic violence should be a matter of high public concern. Unfortunately, it is viewed by many people as a private matter in which others should not interfere. Domestic violence continues because it is accepted as "normal" by many and just ignored by others. It is not easy for we as a community to accept that our homes and families are the setting for some of the most dangerous life threatening violence ever experienced. Hundreds of thousands of women are sexually, physically, emotionally, socially and economically abused every day in our country. The F.B.I. reports approximately 4 million women each year are victimized by a spouse or loved one and that a woman is abused every 15 seconds in our country.

I would like to announce my firm commitment and dedication to the elimination of domestic abuse in our community. The Office of the Attorney General has developed a domestic violence program that provides state-wide education, training and technical assistance to businesses who may be affected by domestic violence. We promote the development of a comprehensive set of strategies to deal with a very complex problem. The development of such strategies necessitates a collaborative effort among police, prosecutors, the courts, victim service providers, and businesses alike. It is my pleasure to bring to you those strategies.

## Overview

***Domestic Violence is a workplace issue.*** The fact is that domestic violence affects the workplace in terms of bottom-line economics, productivity, employee safety, and individual well-being. Nearly four million women are battered in this country every year, and many of these women are working women. Domestic violence can result in reduced productivity, increased medical expenses, absenteeism, and increased risk of violence at the workplace. Organizations should examine their policies and procedures as it relates to domestic violence because it makes good business sense. Over the past two decades, the American workplace has changed dramatically. Until fairly recently, it has been a place that focused almost exclusively on "getting the job done", where workers were expected to leave their problems and personal lives at home ----- or risk losing their jobs. More and more, employers today recognize that personal, "real life" problems affect job performance, and job performance affects the bottom line. Because of this change, employers now routinely offer employees a full spectrum of assistance programs to help them deal with issues such as drug and alcohol addiction, family problems and challenging medical conditions---- finding that doing-so is ultimately more cost-effective than leaving employees to solve those problems on their own. Increasingly, employers across the U.S. are addressing domestic violence by implementing programs and policies that respond to and help prevent abuse and treat it as a preventable health problem and bottom-line business issue. Business should respond to domestic violence in its own enlightened self-interest, and should do it in a business way. By working to mitigate the economic, legal, and productivity risks related to domestic violence, a business will also create a workplace that is safer for victims, and will send a powerful message to society that responding to domestic violence is simply "good business".

## What Is Domestic Violence In The Workplace?

Domestic violence in the workplace is a broad concept that encompasses behavior that occurs both on and off the worksite. Domestic violence in the workplace includes all behavior that interferes with an individual's capacity to safely and securely perform their duties at work. It includes an array of conduct ranging from harassing or repeated telephone calls or faxes at work to unarmed and armed "show-ups" to homicide. Domestic violence in the workplace also includes conduct that occurs outside of the workplace, such as sleep deprivation and physical injuries (breaking fingers, etc.) which impact on an individual's ability to perform their job. A batterer's interference in the workplace or work success of his target is one of many means by which the batterer exercises and displays his attempt to exert power and control. Domestic violence affects the workplace when an abuser harasses an employee who is on the job, when a victim is absent because of injuries or less productive due to stress – or when violence occurs at the worksite. Helping employees who are experiencing abuse can be a real challenge for human resource professionals and managers – but it is a challenge worth meeting. Doing so begins with a strategic plan and written policies and procedures – and with a real commitment to offer support and resources to those in need.

## What Is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a **pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors**, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners. The perpetrator does this as a means of achieving compliance from or control over his victim. It occurs in relationships where conflict is the continuous result of power inequality between the partners and one partner is afraid of, and harmed by the other. The issues of power and control are essential to an understanding of domestic violence.

It is **purposeful conduct** perpetrated by adults or adolescents against their intimate partners in current or former dating, married or cohabitating relationships regardless of sex, race, color or creed. Despite this diversity, statistics from the U.S. Department of Justice estimate 85% of all victims of domestic violence are women. Because the vast majority of domestic violence victims are women, it is common for the pronoun "she" to be used when referring to victims of abuse. However, men can also be victims of abuse.

It involves a **pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors**, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks as well as economic coercion. While actual physical abuse may occur, the abuser is also very likely to use non-assaultive types of abuse, such as verbal abuse and economic control. When physical and sexual abuse has occurred in any relationship, emotional abuse takes on added force and can have a more detrimental impact on victims. A single act of physical violence increases the impact of subsequent threats of violent behavior and other psychologically abusive acts. Economic control may occur when the abuser prevents the victim from getting to work by taking her car keys away, controls all of the household income, or denies her money for her day-to-day needs.

These patterns include a variety of tactics that are carried out in **multiple and sometimes daily episodes**. The result of this is that the victim can sometimes be disoriented and in a perpetual state of fear because she does not know what or when the next episode of abuse will be.

The following definitions of emotional, physical, sexual and psychological abuse have been written using male gender when referring to the abuser and female gender when referring to the victims. While specific abusive acts can occur between any two people regardless of gender, those acts do not always have the same meaning and impact of the act. As mentioned above, in 85% of the cases, men rather women are more likely to direct systematic, persistent physical force against their partners. Even when men are the targets of physical force by their partners, they are usually not likely to experience the fear and humiliation, or serious injury that women victims report.

**Domestic violence is any repeated and systematic pattern of behaviors in a relationship used in an attempt to gain and/or maintain control and power over another**

**Physical Abuse** is any use of size, strength, or presence to hurt or control someone else. Although some of these behaviors are clearly more dangerous than others, all show a lack of respect and an attempt to control the other person's behavior.

Pushing	Pulling	Slapping	Unplugging Phone
Biting	Strangling (choking)	Shoving	Stalking
Grabbing	Pinching	Kicking	Taking Car Keys
Spitting	Hair Pulling	Twisting Arm	Taking Credit Cards or Money
Burning	Shooting	Stabbing	Abuse of Animals
Restraining	Pulling Out of Car	Chasing	Clenching Fists
Sitting on Partner	Pinning Against Wall	Punching	Abandoning in Unsafe Area
Forcibly Carrying Partner	Murder	Throwing Things	Threatening With an Object
Breaking Objects	Driving Recklessly	Slamming Doors	Abuse of Children
Tearing Clothes	Punching Walls or Doors	Kicking Objects	Threatening With a Weapon
Unplugging Phone	Stalking	Taking Car Keys	Sabotaging Vehicle

**Emotional Abuse** is any use of words, voice, action or lack of action meant to control hurt or demean another person. This type of abuse is usually harder to define than physical abuse but hurts survivors as seriously as physical abuse. Emotionally abusive relationships are defined as involving repeated hurtful exchanges with a disregard for the partner's feelings.

Threatening to Kill	Threatening Children	Name Calling
Accusations of Unfaithfulness	Making Insinuations	Yelling
Leaving Hostile Messages	Using Insults	Being Sarcastic
Growling	Criticizing	Having Affairs
Insulting Family or Friends	Threatening Suicide	Humiliating
Being Irresponsible with Money	Checking up on Partner	Making Faces at Partner
Isolating Partner	Intense Jealousy	Taking Partner's Things
Keeping Partner from Sleeping	Threatening to Divorce	Threatening to Take Children

**Sexual Abuse** is any sexual behavior meant to control, manipulate, humiliate or demean another person. Sexual violence is common in abusive relationships and is often used as a means to exert power over the intimate partner. This type of abuse is used to further shame and humiliate the survivor.

Unwanted Touching	Sexual Name Calling	Forced Sex With Partner
Hurtful Sex	Rape With an Object	Forcing Partner to Strip
Forced Sex With Animals	Unwanted Sadistic Sexual Acts	Forcing to Watch Others
Demeaning Remarks	Berates Sexual History	Minimizing Feelings
Sexual Criticism	Insists on Certain Types of Dress	Excessive Fantasizing

## Who Are The Abusers?

**There is no typical domestic violence perpetrator**, but psychologists have identified some common characteristics. Many abusers suffer from low self-esteem, and their sense of self and identity is tied to their partner. Therefore, if abusers feel they are somehow losing the victim, either through separation, divorce, emotional detachment, or pregnancy (fearing victims will replace love for them with love for a child), they will lash out. If victims "leave" through any of these methods, abusers feel they are losing power, control, and their self-identity. This is why it is particularly dangerous for victims during periods of separation or divorce from their partner. Abusers will often do anything to maintain control and keep the victim under control. This dynamic also makes escalating violence inevitable, as many victims must become emotionally unavailable, or must physically leave, in order to survive.

While the public may think of domestic violence abusers as out of control, crazy, and unpredictable, the contrary is most often true. Use of psychological, emotional, and physical abuse intermingled with periods of respite, love, and happiness are deliberate coercive tools used to generate submission. Abusers may violently assault, then minutes later offer words of regret. Many will buy gifts of flowers, candy and other presents in order to win favor and forgiveness. This creates a very confusing environment for victims. Abusers may say they will never harm their partners again, and promise to obtain help or counseling. Often, these promises are only made to prevent victims from leaving. Without getting help, the violence will most likely recur.

The violence used by abusers is controlled and manipulative. Victims often can predict exactly when violence will erupt. Many law enforcement officers have commented on their surprise at finding significant evidence of a violent incident, a harmed victim, and a composed perpetrator casually speaking with officers as if nothing occurred.

Finally, many victims describe domestic violence perpetrators as having a "Jekyll and Hyde" personality. Abusers often experience dramatic mood swings of highs and lows. They may be loving one minute, and spiteful and cruel the next. Abusers are frequently characterized by those outside the home as generous, caring, and good, and behave drastically differently in their home environment. Perpetrators of domestic violence are rarely violent to those outside of their domicile.

# Why Do People Abuse Their Intimate Partners?

## People Learn to Abuse

The individual who abuses has most times learned this behavior through a combination of 3 processes. Usually, this abusive behavior is learned through the family of origin by: 1) direct instruction, 2) modeling or learning through observation, and 3) learning by reinforcement that violence is effective or "rewarding."

## People Must Have the "Opportunity" to Abuse

Learning to abuse does not mean that individuals will automatically become abusive. For an individual to behave violently, he or she must also have the opportunity to abuse without suffering negative consequences. The potential abuser must perceive that he or she can "get away with it" and may view the behavior as an entitlement to overpower and control their victims. The criminal justice system plays a significant role in reducing the opportunity for batterers to continue their behavior.

## People Choose to Abuse

Although people may learn to abuse and have the opportunity to get away with it, abusive individuals also make a conscious choice to abuse. Abusers typically abuse because they can. Abusers have the ability to make different choices (or at least learn them), and are solely responsible for their violence.

## Batterer Beliefs

Anger Causes Violence  
Women Are Manipulative  
If I Don't Control Her, She'll Control Me  
Smashing Things Isn't Abusive; It's Venting  
Sometimes There Is No Alternative To Violence  
Women Are Just As Violent As Men  
Women Want To Be Dominated By Men  
Somebody has To Be In Charge  
Jealousy Is Natural In Men  
Violence Is A Breakdown In Communication  
Men Can't Change If Women Won't

## Why Do Women Sometimes Stay In Abusive Relationships? The Barriers To Living Violence Free

For someone who has never experienced domestic violence, the question of why an abuse victim stays is one of the most difficult to comprehend.

If the criminal justice system, service providers, and the community at large are to help stem the tide of domestic –related homicides and assaults, it is vital that they understand the many factors that influence the victim's decision to remain. The following list, while hardly exhaustive, describes some of the reasons why abuse victims stay (at least temporarily).

### Personal Barriers

As a result of ongoing abuse, domestic violence victims experience a drop in their self-esteem and frequently become depressed, even suicidal. Feelings of **fear**, shame, guilt, and humiliation are common. As well, an abuse victim may lack material resources and emotional support.

### Relationship Barriers

The batterer will deny his or her partner access to financial resources, emotional support, transportation, employment, and education. The various forms of physical, emotional and sexual abuse also contributes to the victim's entrapment in the relationship. If the batterer holds a prominent position in the community, the victim may doubt her ability to make herself heard or believed.

If the batterer is the primary wage earner, the victim may question her ability to provide for herself and her children.

The victim may still love the batterer; if she has children, she may have concerns about separating them from their father and raising them alone.

The batterer may blame the abuse on substance abuse issues or job stress, leading the victim to believe that if these problems can be solved, the domestic violence will end.

### Familial Barriers

The victim may fear losing custody of her children—a Massachusetts study found that in 70% of the cases in which a father requested some form of custody, he was successful.

The victim may believe it is in the children's best interests to live in a two-parent home.

Batterers are capable of manipulating children to plead "just let Daddy come home!"



### **Institutional / Economic Barriers**

Denied services, lack of services, cultural insensitivity, discrimination, racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of oppression prevent domestic violence victims from getting the effective assistance they need when trying to flee violent relationships. The victim may be without financial resources if she leaves, and may not have marketable job skills.

Batterers may deny the victim access to money or financial records; batterers may also prohibit victims from working outside the home or may interfere with victims' attempts to gain or maintain employment by refusing to allow victims to go to job interviews or by harassing victims at their workplace.

### **Cultural Barriers**

Language differences, beliefs about the meaning of marriage and family, gender roles, and religious beliefs can affect a victim's decision to stay or leave an abusive relationship. Family members may think there is no excuse for leaving a marriage or may have been deceived by the batterer's public charm or charisma.

Religious beliefs may lead victims to think they must tolerate the abuse to adhere to their faith.

Cultural defenses may be cited by batterers, victims, or other community members; similarly, the victim may feel torn between reporting the abuse and participating in a justice system she feels is biased against her ethnic or racial group.

### **Past Experiences**

A previous history of abuse with another partner may lead the victim to believe the batterer's claim, "See, this is what you drive your men to do!"

Either the victim's or the batterer's substance abuse or alcoholism may lead the victim to fear her children will be removed if she seeks help.

The victim knows her batterer, and may have good reason to fear he will follow through on his threats against her or her children if she leaves. It is estimated that a battered woman is 75% more likely to be murdered when she flees or has fled than when she stays—extensive safety planning is thus essential.

If the victim grew up in an abusive household, low self-esteem or the belief that her experiences are the norm may bolster the batterer's attempts to maintain power and control over her.

If the victim has had prior negative experiences with the court system, she may be skeptical of its ability or willingness to offer assistance.

If the police have failed to respond to 911 calls or if they have minimized her fears and concerns and downplayed the violence when responding to past calls, victims may see little value in contacting them after further incidents of violence.

### **Physical or Logistical Challenges**

Batterers often isolate victims from friends and family. Victims may not know where to go for help. Victims living in rural communities may be even more isolated from resources such as shelters or domestic violence advocates.

Physical challenges or disabilities may make it more difficult for the victim to access services and can also compound feelings of isolation.

Mentally retarded or developmentally delayed individuals are particularly vulnerable to manipulation by a batterer and are more dependent on him for basic survival.

Elderly victims may be more dependent on the batterer for care and may fear being placed in a nursing home if they leave the batterer. Moreover, elderly victims tend to hold more traditional beliefs about marriage and may not believe that divorce is an option for them.

Medical problems may cause the victim to stay with the batterer to maintain insurance coverage.

Victims may be without transportation to access child care or a job if they leave.

A victim may feel there is literally no place to go—no affordable housing, no shelter that can accommodate her and her children.

### **Other Considerations**

The victim may be unaware that abuse constitutes a criminal offense, or that services that could help her are available in her community.

Any number of special circumstances can affect a victim's willingness to leave. Spouses of military servicemen, spouses of law enforcement officers, members of the gay and lesbian community, previously incarcerated victims on parole, illiterate victims, and undocumented alien residents are all examples of victims who may face unique obstacles to leaving their abusive relationship. Fear for her life and / or her children's lives; fear of retaliation; nowhere to go; economic realities; children; isolation; preservation of family; religious beliefs; focus on day-to-day survival; and lack of adequate resources are all other factors that may affect a victim of domestic abuse from leaving the abusive relationship.

## The Effects Of Domestic Violence On Survivors

- ◆ Isolation
- ◆ Fear
- ◆ Guilt and/or self-blame
- ◆ Shame
- ◆ Humiliation
- ◆ Confusion
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Possible self-medication with drugs
- ◆ May have difficulty trusting others; thinks no one can help
- ◆ May minimize or deny abuse
- ◆ Numbing of feelings
- ◆ Physical ailments such as migraines or stomach disorders
- ◆ Exhaustion
- ◆ Nightmares and flashbacks
- ◆ Sleeping and eating problems
- ◆ Hyper-vigilance

## Myths About Domestic Violence

### About the Cause

- ◆ Domestic Violence Affects Only A Small Percentage Of The population.
- ◆ Domestic Violence Is Not A Serious Social Problem
- ◆ Wife Battering Is A Predominately Lower Class Phenomenon
- ◆ Wife Battering Occurs More Often In Some Ethnic Groups Than Others
- ◆ Alcohol/ Drug Abuse Causes Domestic Violence
- ◆ Religious Beliefs And Practices Will Prevent Domestic Violence.

### About the Women

- ◆ Battered Women Must Have Done something To Deserve A Beating
- ◆ Women Who Are battered Must Be Crazy Or Neurotic
- ◆ Battered Women Are masochistic And Probably Enjoy The Abuse
- ◆ Once A Battered Woman, Always A Battered Woman
- ◆ Battered Women Are probably Uneducated And Have few Job Skills
- ◆ Battered Women Can Always Leave

### About the Men

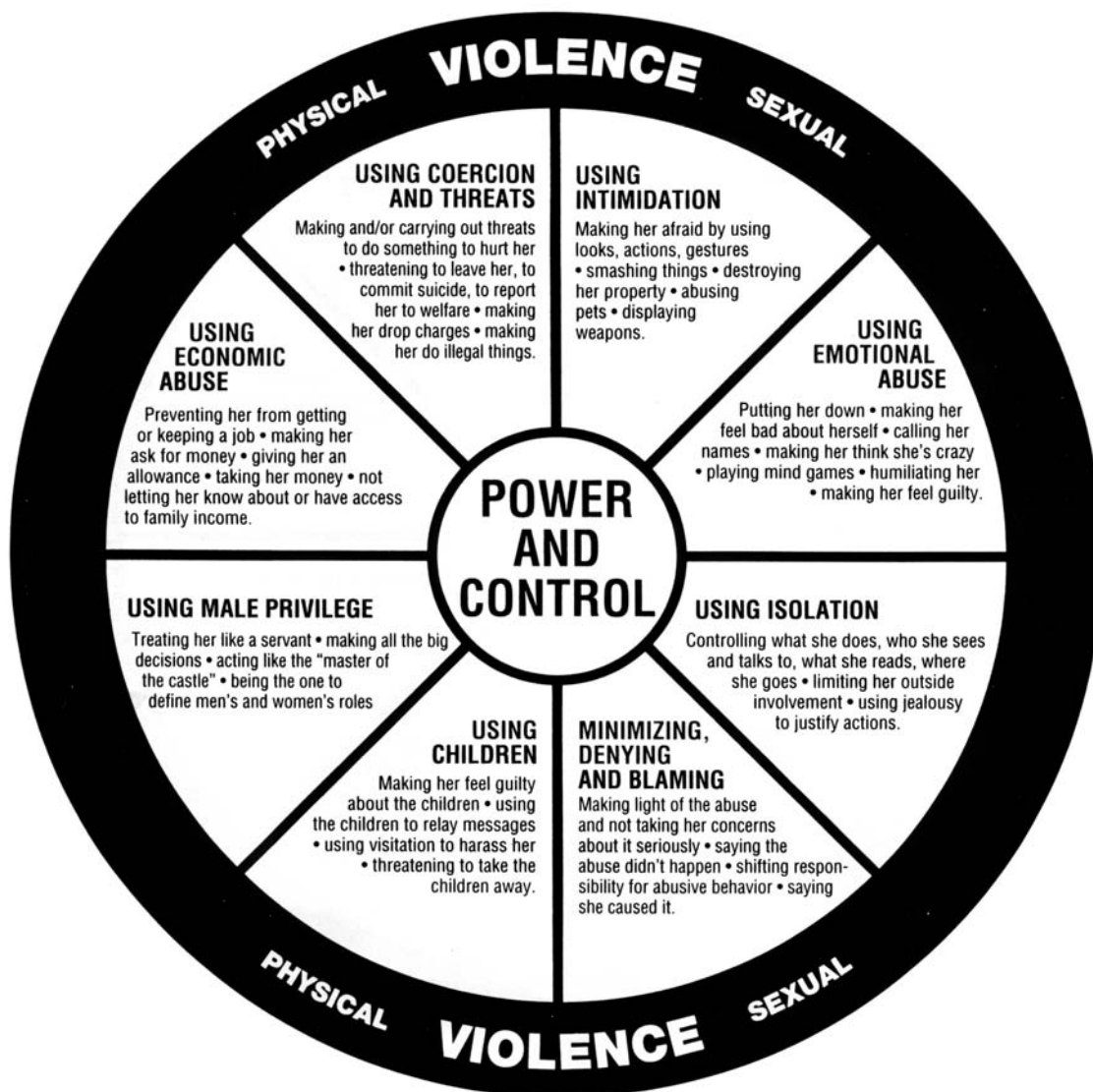
- ◆ Violent Men Cannot Control Their Violence
- ◆ Violent Men Are "Sick"
- ◆ Regret And Remorse On The Part Of The Man Means He Has Changed
- ◆ Violent Men Can't Or Won't Change
- ◆ The Batterer Is Not A "Loving" Partner.
- ◆ Batterers Are Violent In All Of Their Relationships.

### About the Solutions

- ◆ Violence Is A Healthy Response And Understandable
- ◆ The Relationship Will Get Better
- ◆ It Is Best To Keep The Family Together To Work On The Problem
- ◆ Leaving The Relationship Will End The Violence

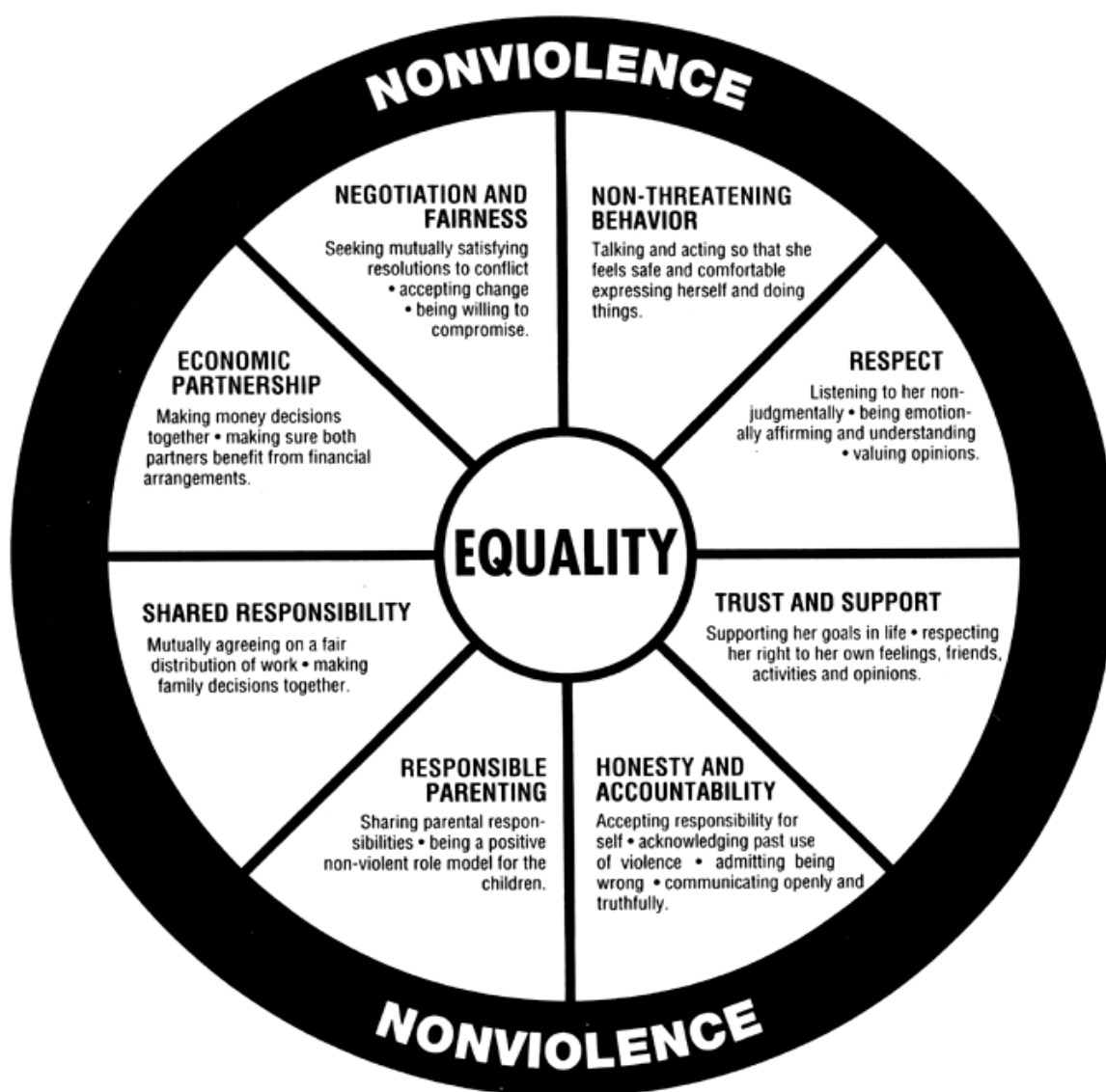
## The Power And Control Wheel

Physical and sexual assaults, or threat to commit them, are the most apparent forms of domestic violence and are usually the actions that allow others to become aware of the problem. However, regular use of other abusive behaviors by the batterer, when reinforced by one or more acts of physical violence make up a larger system of abuse. Although physical assaults may occur only once or occasionally, they instill the threat of future violence attacks and allow the abuser to take control of the woman's life and circumstances. The Power and Control diagram is a particularly helpful tool in understanding the overall pattern of abusive and violent behaviors which is used by a batterer to establish and maintain control over his partner. Very often, one or more violence incidents are accompanied by an array of these other types of abuse. They are less easily identified, yet firmly establish a pattern of intimidation and control in the relationship.



## The Equality Wheel

The Equality Wheel offers a view of a relationship that is based on equality and non-violence. Use this chart to compare the characteristics of a non-violent relationship to those of an abusive relationship.



# The Facts On The Workplace And Violence Against Women

Women are at risk for violence at home, in the community and in the workplace. An estimated 52.3 million women are physically assaulted and 17.7 million women are raped or sexually assaulted at least once in their lifetimes. With nearly one-third of American women reporting being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend some time in their lives, domestic violence is a concern for every employer.

Employers have many reasons to consider violence against women a workplace issue –both ethical and "bottom line" reasons. One is that employers absorb a large portion of the health care costs related to domestic violence, which total nearly \$4.1 billion each year.

## Unique Risks of Violence for Women:

Men and women are both at risk for violence, but women are affected in different ways and benefit from different prevention initiatives, services and solutions.

- Women are more likely to be victimized by a friend, family member or intimate partner than by a stranger.
- In 2001, 85 percent of all surveyed victims of intimate partner violence were women.
- In 2001, three in four homicide victims who were murdered by their intimate partners were women (74 percent).
- Most rape victims are women. About one in six women (18 percent) has been a victim of rape or attempted rape at some time in her life.
- Most stalking victims (78 percent) are women.
- Women are more likely to be injured as a result of violence. Half of female domestic violence victims were injured in attacks, in comparison to one-third (32 percent) of male victims.

## Violence Against Women Affects the Workplace:

- For women, homicide was the second leading cause of death on the job in 2003.
- Women are the victims in 80 percent of rapes and sexual assaults that take place in the workplace – at least 29,000 acts of rape or sexual assault each year.
- Women who have been raped or sexually assaulted report diminished work functioning, sometimes for up to eight months after the attack.
- An estimated one million women are stalked each year in the U.S., and about one-fourth of them report missing work as a result of the stalking, missing an average of eleven days.

- One study of female domestic violence victims found that 44 percent were left without transportation when the abuser disabled the car or hid the car keys.
- In a survey of 7,000 women, 37 percent said domestic violence had a negative impact on their job performance.
- Among a group of abused employees receiving workplace counseling, the average absenteeism rate of the group at the time of beginning counseling was about 30 percent higher than the average employee absenteeism rate.

### Employers' Perspectives:

Violence against women can occur on the job. Employers need to be concerned about their responsibility to maintain safe work sites. A single incident can have a dramatic effect on the workplace, both emotionally and financially. In one case, a wrongful death action cost an employer \$850,000 for failing to help an employee who was at risk for domestic violence on the job.

#### Employers are concerned:

- In a 2002 study, two in three (66 percent of) corporate leaders identified domestic violence as a major social issue.
- Only 33 percent of those sampled said that domestic violence has a negligible impact on the "bottom line," indicating that two-thirds believed it affects business functioning.
- At a meeting of health benefit managers from small and large businesses around the country, all 25 participants described the effects of domestic violence in the workplace as absenteeism, inability to focus, poor self-esteem, low productivity, and low morale. These same managers noted that employers who take steps to prevent domestic violence see improvements in performance, productivity, health, work site safety, job retention, and other outcomes related to employee well being.
- In a survey of 29 employers who had already implemented a response to violence against women, 100 percent said that their motives for responding included "making the workplace safer," "expressing concern for the personal needs of our employees" and "being part of the solution to domestic violence or sexual assault."

***Employers who address domestic violence can provide real help to victims and reduce the associated risks.***



# Seven Reasons Employers Should Address Domestic Violence

Domestic violence was a hidden concern that did not show up on the public's radar screen until relatively recently.

Employers face numerous human resource concerns, with limited time and money. Often a decision to focus on a specific problem is not made until the problem becomes significant and costly. Historically, problems with a social stigma are less likely to receive attention, as both employers and employees may be reluctant to acknowledge that these problems exist.

Domestic violence was a hidden concern that did not show up on the public's radar screen until relatively recently. Some employers are addressing it, but many more are not. The following are seven compelling reasons that employers should take action on this issue.

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## Reason 1. Domestic violence affects many employees.

- Nearly one-third of American women (31 percent) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives.
- More than one million people report a violent assault by an intimate partner every year in the U.S.
- At least one million women and 371,000 men are victims of stalking in the U.S. each year. Stalkers often follow the victim to the workplace.

## Reason 2. Domestic violence is a security and liability concern.

- Ninety-four percent of corporate security directors surveyed rank domestic violence as a high security problem at their company.
- Employers who fail to protect their employees from violence at work may be liable. Jury awards for inadequate security suits average \$1.2 million nationwide and settlements average \$600,000.
- In the case of *La Rose v. State Mutual Life Assurance Co.*, Francesia La Rose's family filed a wrongful-death action against her employer when she was murdered by a former boyfriend at the work site. The employer paid a settlement of \$850,000 for failing to protect her after being notified of a specific threat.

## Reason 3. Domestic violence is a performance and productivity concern.

- In one study of batterers, 41 percent had job performance problems and 48 percent had difficulty concentrating on the job as a result of their abusive behaviors.
- Thirty-seven percent of women who experienced domestic violence reported that the abuse had an

impact on their work in the form of lateness, missed work, keeping a job, or career promotions.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that the annual cost of lost productivity due to domestic violence equals \$727.8 million, with more than 7.9 million paid workdays lost each year.

#### **Reason 4. Domestic violence is a health care concern.**

- The national health care costs of domestic violence are high, with direct medical and mental health care services for victims amounting to nearly \$4.1 billion.
- Among women admitted to an emergency room for violence-related injuries, 37 percent were abused by an intimate partner.
- In a study on the effects of violence, women who experienced any type of violence or abuse were significantly more likely to report being in "fair or poor" health, and were almost twice as likely to be coping with some form of depression.

#### **Reason 5. Domestic violence is a management issue.**

- In a 2002 survey of senior corporate executives, 91 percent said that domestic violence affects both the private and working lives of their employees.
- In addition, more than half (56 percent) of those surveyed were aware of employees who have been affected by domestic violence.
- In a 1994 survey, 66 percent of executives said their companies' financial performance would benefit from addressing the issue of domestic violence among their employees.

#### **Reason 6. Taking action in response to domestic violence works.**

- After participating in domestic violence training at a factory, the rate of employees asking for workplace counseling services for domestic abuse problems was 14 times what it had been prior to the training.
- When a sample group of 40 abused employees at the factory began using the domestic abuse counseling services, their average absence rate was higher than the factory's average absence rate. After using counseling services, the abused employees reduced their absenteeism rates to normal.

#### **Reason 7. Employers can make a difference.**

- Numerous corporations, government agencies and domestic violence experts are already addressing domestic violence, with great success. You can make a difference in your workplace and in the lives of employees who are facing abuse!

## Principles For Workplace Responses To Domestic Violence

Every week we hear another horrific story about how someone killed a family member or intimate partner at the workplace. Domestic violence devastates both our society and our workplaces. This violence costs employers billions of dollars in absenteeism and lost wages, increases health care costs and devastates morale. These are our workplaces. We must put our own houses in order: doing so helps our colleagues, supervisors, co-workers, clients and communities to be safer and to thrive.

Survivors face many challenges in being safe: having an employer who is informed and who supports her can provide options for safety and independence as no other sector or community service can. Plus, it makes good business and legal sense: employers are tasked with complying with a daunting array of federal, state, and local laws governing their responses to victims of domestic violence; those who are uninformed about their legal obligations face increased exposure to liability.

In 1995-96, a national coalition of employer, labor and governmental organizations set out to define a set of standards that would guide workplace responses to domestic violence. The result of that process was a consensus document called *Ten Principles for the Workplace*, which describes the attributes of a comprehensive and compassionate workplace response to domestic violence. The following is inclusive of that body of work.

### *Creating Safe Workplaces:*

#### **Strive to create a workplace environment that is safe from all forms of violence.**

This includes domestic violence and should support victims of domestic violence to understand and access services, information, and protections available to them. Workplaces should, to the fullest extent possible, take active measures to increase safety of all employees who request assistance because they are victims of domestic violence. Workplaces should acknowledge the importance of keeping all requests for assistance in confidence, making information available only on a "need to know" basis.

#### **Maintain a safe and secure workplace, including data systems.**

Since September 11th, employers have become more conscious about security in the workplace. Victims know well the tactics abusers use and abusers often act predictably, thus aiding employers in preventing workplace violence. Abusers may threaten an employee at work or may use company email and other systems to stalk and harass victims. Employers should work closely with employees, in-house security and local law enforcement to create safe environments, be able to respond quickly to a violent incident or threat.

#### **Protect confidentiality.**

In all workplace responses to domestic violence, businesses should respect the authority and autonomy of the adult victim to direct his or her own. Employees may not come forward and talk to their supervisors about abuse, unless they are assured that this information will remain confidential. The domestic violence workplace policy and any related guidelines should detail the path information will take when a victim tells

her supervisor or a co-worker about her situation and seeks help. The victims should also be told of who will be informed and if or how their revealing information about domestic violence will be used.

### **Comply with all local, state and federal laws.**

This tip is particularly important for multi-jurisdictional employers, as there is a plethora of laws affecting domestic violence victims and the workplace. These include Federal laws such as Family Medical Leave Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Occupational Safety Health Act. More than 40 states and locales have enacted legislation specifically directed to domestic violence in the workplace. These laws include anti-discrimination, leave provisions, and unemployment compensation protections. There also are local ordinances, enacted in locales such as New York City, New Orleans, Miami Dade County, Florida, and Los Angeles. Traditional statutory and tort law remedies also may govern an employer's response to victims of domestic violence.

### ***Creating Fair Workplaces:***

#### **Adhere to anti-discrimination policies.**

Acknowledge that employees who are victims of domestic violence should have the same rights, opportunities, and benefits as all other employees. It is important that employees should not be disciplined or terminated simply because they have been victims of domestic violence or because the employer fears the impact of domestic violence on the workplace, nor should any person be denied opportunities for employment, benefits, or promotion because they are or have been victims of domestic violence. Businesses should indicate their commitment to non-discrimination against domestic violence victims in all aspects of business and operations, including the delivery of services to customers. Employees who commit acts of domestic violence at or from the workplace must be treated or disciplined in the same manner as employees who commit other acts of violence or harassment at or from the workplace. Where appropriate, attempt to provide employees with referrals to certified batterers' treatment programs.

#### **Be consistent and be vigilant -- protect victims and hold offenders accountable.**

A policy is critical to ensuring uniform responses to domestic violence in the workplace; it helps reduce employer liability and helps to prevent violence. It also shows employees that their company cares about their welfare. If the employer does not consistently follow the policy in either supporting victim safety or holding all perpetrators fully accountable, the policy will be little more than feel-good window dressing. Employers should take care to develop, implement and regularly monitor policy effectiveness and work to maintain broad support for it.

#### **Make benefits victim/employee-friendly.**

Over 22 states prohibit insurers from discriminating against domestic violence victims and employers should check the underwriting history of their company-retained insurers. Employers should actively strategize with individual employees who are victims as well as with human resources, security and local domestic violence programs on how they can make their benefits, including leave, insurance, and transfer policies work for victims.

## *Creating Informed And Productive Workplaces:*

### **Adopt a policy specific to domestic violence and move beyond general awareness.**

Employers should adopt a policy that specifically addresses domestic violence. General workplace violence policies do not address the unique aspects of this kind of violence. Also, having an overall "zero tolerance for violence" policy may sound good, but it could bring trouble. For example, employers who fire an employee for any act of violence could find themselves in court defending against unlawful termination or discrimination. "Zero tolerance" policies can also have the unintended consequence of making a victim think twice about calling police or seeking a protection order if doing so will result in their partner being fired. This can also subject the victim to retaliatory violence as well as threaten the financial stability of the entire family. Employers should move beyond general awareness about the issue. Putting a domestic violence safety plan on the website, or posters in the restrooms are great starts, but the more meaningful work comes with developing, adopting and implementing a specific domestic violence and the workplace policy.

### **Train all employees on the policy.**

A policy can only be effective if all members of the workforce understand it and are trained on it. Different types of training may be in order for managers and supervisors, human resources, legal and line staff. Employers should retrain regularly and make sure the training is skill-based. Supervisors and co-workers alike must understand how to respond in an informed, non-judgmental and helpful way and to help an abused employee, consistent with company policy.

## **Creating Socially Responsible Workplaces:**

### **Link with community programs.**

Local domestic violence programs exist to advocate and support victims of domestic violence. They are the local experts who can help victims explore options for safety for herself and her children. They are also great resources for training development and co-training with employer trainers. The employer should refer employees to local services and not undertake the responsibility of safety planning, and victim advocacy. A supervisor or co-worker's best-intentioned advice can be dangerous and advice coming from an employer can appear to be coercive. The employer should be link to resources, not the resource itself. The employer's role in safety planning should be limited to considering ways of enhancing victim's sense of security at work, e.g., providing a different parking space; installing locks or changing office location. Further, employers have a great deal to offer to support local programs' work, from loaning a board room for meetings, to helping to raise awareness about the domestic violence programs' work.












Adapted from "The Workplace Responds to Domestic Violence: A Resource Guide for Employers, Unions and Advocates", Family Violence Prevention Fund, 383 Rhode Island St., Suite 304, San Francisco, CA, 94103, (415) 252-8900.

Domestic Violence and the Workplace: 10 Smart "Nuts and Bolts" Steps for Employers, ABA Commission on Domestic Violence 740 15th Street, NW, 9th Floor Washington, DC, 20005-1022

## Creating A Supportive Work Place Environment

- ✓ Display posters with anti-domestic violence messages.
- ✓ Provide training and educational seminars on the topic.
- ✓ Participate in local, state, and national domestic violence awareness events.
- ✓ Include articles on the topic in company newsletters.
- ✓ Include in-house resources and local domestic violence programs
- ✓ Distribute “palm” cards, brochures & other printed materials.
- ✓ Place in discrete locations such as restrooms or employee lounge
- ✓ Provide specialized intervention training to key personnel.

## Domestic Violence: Work Place Warning Signs

-  Repeated and / or unexplained physical injuries
-  Isolated from friends, family, other co-workers
-  Frequent absences from work
-  Frequently late for work
-  Frequent / harassing phone calls from partner
-  Decreased productivity / inattentiveness
-  Frequent doctor's appointments
-  Hypersensitivity to touch / loud noises
-  Signs of depression / crying at work
-  Talks about partner's anger or temper
-  Mentions stress at home

# Effective Intervention With Employees Experiencing Domestic Violence

## When You Suspect An Employee Is Being Abused

Demanding inquiries about possible abuse may be perceived as threatening and/or intrusive. Talking about domestic violence is an emotionally charged event for both the survivor and the confidante and should be handled with sensitivity. The following are suggestions for addressing domestic violence with an employee you suspect is being abused.

- ✓ Remember that it is often very difficult for a survivor to discuss her/his crisis. The employee may deny or minimize the abuse, be afraid that she/he will be fired or that her abuser will retaliate with increased violence.
- ✓ The issue of domestic violence should only be brought up in a private, safe environment.
- ✓ Consider prefacing the conversation with statements such as "I'm very concerned about you" or "You're such a good employee, but lately you seem very distracted and upset."
- ✓ Questions should be stated simply and clearly, in a sensitive and non-judgmental manner.
- ✓ Questions you can ask include:

Has your partner ever threatened to hurt you?  
Are you afraid of your partner when he/she gets mad?  
Does your partner try to control you and what you do?  
Has your partner ever threatened your children?  
Has your partner ever physically hurt you?  
Has your partner ever physically hurt your children?

- ✓ Indirect questions can be asked when there is no obvious evidence of domestic abuse but you suspect the employee is abused.

I talk to many women who have similar problems. Many of these women are being hurt by a loved one. Are you in this situation?

Many women I talk to are in relationships with someone who is hurting or controlling them. Are you in a relationship like this?

## What To Do For An Employee Experiencing Domestic Violence

### Supervisor/Manager

- ☺ Be alert to the warning signs of domestic violence.
- ☺ Consult with your EAP Counselor and/or Human Resources Administrator to discuss your concerns and how to approach the employee.
- ☺ Address performance-related issues and make referrals to services that may help the employee. Give employees time to improve their performance.
- ☺ Honor all civil protection orders.
- ☺ If you have a Security Office, contact them and make sure the employee has provided the necessary information to help them protect her/him while at the work site.
- ☺ Be alert to the seriousness of the situation.

### Human Resource Personnel

- ☺ Be a resource to both the employee and the supervisor/manager in handling the situation. Follow recommended procedures and use appropriate resources.
- ☺ Contact the EAP Counselor immediately.
- ☺ Develop a safety plan with the employee and the EAP Counselor.
- ☺ Handle communications with employee during her/his absence.
- ☺ Handle pay and absence situation with supervisor/manager.

### Employee Assistance Program Counselor

- ☺ Be a resource to the employee, the supervisor/manager and HR personnel.
- ☺ Collaborate with Human Resource personnel in all situations
- ☺ Continue to be available during the employee's absence.
- ☺ Make appropriate referrals, including the local domestic violence program and/or the National Domestic Violence Hotline.
- ☺ Share information.
- ☺ Develop a safety plan with the employee and HR Personnel.
- ☺ Maintain a liaison position between the local shelter staff and the company for the purpose of counseling needs.



## How To Talk To An Employee Who Is Being Abused

- ✓ **Keep It Confidential.** Don't tell other people without the employee's permission. If there is a threat to the workplace, tell the employee that you will need to take action to protect everyone. Information should be shared on a "need to know" basis only.
- ✓ **Listen.** Encourage the employee to express her/his feelings about the abuse, including feelings of anger, shame, fear, guilt, and confusion.
- ✓ **Believe The Employee.** Let the employee know that you believe her/him and that domestic violence is illegal and unacceptable to you and the company. Remember, no matter how horrible the situation sounds, survivors are more likely to minimize the abuse they are experiencing rather than exaggerate it.
- ✓ **Don't Minimize.** Acknowledge the validity of these complex feelings and do not deny or minimize any of her/his feelings.
- ✓ **Do Not Judge.** Strongly communicate to the employee that you do not blame her/him for the abuse. Let the employee know that IT IS NOT her/his fault.
- ✓ **Avoid Giving Advice.** You may actually increase the danger the employee is facing by giving advice that is actually unsafe. As well, part of the process of leaving an abusive relationship is being able to make personal decisions. Rather than giving advice or making decisions for the employee, provide support, information, and referrals.
- ✓ **Provide Support.** Tell the employee that she/he is not alone and that she has your support and the support of your company. Offer supportive messages such as:

I am concerned for your safety.  
I am here if you need help.  
You don't deserve to be abused.  
Help is available.

- ✓ **Express Your Admiration.** Acknowledge the courage it takes to talk about domestic violence and let the employee know that she/he is breaking down a wall of silence.

## What Not To Say To An Employee Experiencing Domestic Violence

- ☹ Things may get better over time.
- ☹ This is so hard to believe.
- ☹ He/she just doesn't seem like that kind of person.
- ☹ I can't believe you put up with this.
- ☹ If you're still with him/her it must not be that bad.
- ☹ If you don't leave then you're going to be killed.
- ☹ You can't stay in this situation.
- ☹ You've got to leave.

## Questions Not To Ask An Employee Experiencing Domestic Violence

- ☹ ***Why don't you just leave?***  
(Her/his inability to leave is part of the crisis she/he is experiencing)
- ☹ ***Are you a battered woman/man?***  
(No one likes to be labeled. To many survivors, this is a shameful and self-blaming label. In addition, many survivors deny or minimize the abuse they suffer and may not readily identify with this label)
- ☹ ***What did you do to make him/her mad?***  
(This question implies that the employee is responsible for the abuse she/he is suffering. This type of victim-blaming question will alienate the employee and may prevent them from opening up to you).
- ☹ ***Why haven't you asked for help sooner?***  
This question denies the fear, shame, humiliation, and guilt that the employee may be feeling.

## What To Ask Before You Help A Victim / Survivor Develop A Safety Plan

One of the most important steps a survivor can take is to make a safety plan. Comprehensive safety plans will address the employee's safety needs at home, work, in public, when they stay with the abuser or if they leave the abuser.

Prior to helping an employee develop a safety plan, however, several questions should be asked.

How can I (and others) help you?

What do you feel you need to be safe?

What particular concerns do you have about your  
children's safety?

Would you like me to help you develop a safety plan?

What strategies have you used in the past to  
keep you and your children safe?

Did any of them work?

Will any of them help you now?

## How To Respond To An Employee Who Is A Perpetrator

- ☐ Maintain the confidentiality of the employee.
- ☐ Discuss the problem with the employee if the violence has been disclosed by the employee or if the employee commits an act of domestic violence at work or at an employer-sponsored event.
- ☐ If the violence has not been disclosed, but the supervisor suspects there may be a problem, the supervisor may bring up any job performance problems that may be related to the abuse.
- ☐ Explain how domestic violence affects work performance. One example is to explain the connection between making frequent harassing calls from work and the effects on employee productivity.
- ☐ Hold the employee accountable for his/her actions.
- ☐ Let him/her know that you are concerned for him/her, but you will not condone his/her violent behavior.
- ☐ Send a clear message that no acts of domestic violence will be tolerated by the company.
- ☐ An employer is justified in taking disciplinary or termination action against employees who perpetrate acts of domestic violence on-site or using company resources. (Examples include using a company vehicle to stalk someone or making threatening phone calls using a company telephone.)
- ☐ Refer the employee to a batterer's treatment program.
- ☐ As a part of disciplinary action, consider decreasing the discipline if the employee participates in a batterer's treatment program.
- ☐ Refer the employee to your EAP program for assistance.
- ☐ Call the police if the perpetrator violates a protective order or is violent at work.
- ☐ Don't Be Taken In By Excuses.
- ☐ Don't Assume It Won't Happen Again.
- ☐ Don't Suggest Couples Counseling.

## Domestic Violence: The Security Issues

Domestic violence prevention is not a personal issue or a women's issue. It is a societal issue, and in this context, a security issue. Domestic violence doesn't stay home when women go to work. The impact of domestic violence in the workplace is verifiable, costly and dangerous. Security personnel need to accept that domestic violence issues are important security issues that require dedication of time, energy and resources. The safety issues attendant to domestic violence cannot and should not be resolved by simply referring matters to human resources and/or employee assistance programs, or considering domestic violence to be a private matter. Preventing workplace violence generally, and domestic violence specifically, requires some significant changes in the manner in which security functions have historically been handled.

**Change in Focus** – Prevention of domestic violence in the workplace requires security to become involved earlier in the process than traditional enforcement protocols dictate. Historically, the role of security is to respond to an incident after something has happened. Addressing domestic violence in the workplace mandates intervention and participation by security before actual violence occurs. The focus of these protocols and programs is to train security to react, assess and respond to threats of violence and/or threatening behavior so that violent and injurious incidents at the workplace can be avoided.

**Use of Laws** - Since 1990, many laws have been enacted which enable in-house security to obtain law enforcement and criminal justice support before a violent incident occurs. These laws including stalking law, restraining order and protective order laws and arrest laws can be used in interventions to protect employees before a violent incident occurs. Security personnel should be familiar with these laws and their own work policies.

The following are simple steps that employers can take to help to reduce violent incidents in their workplaces:

1. Create Pre-Incident Threat Assessments
2. Create a Confidential Domestic Violence Threat/Incident Report
3. Reporting and Monitoring
4. Develop a Full Threat Assessment
5. Create a Threat Management System
6. Secure the Working Area
7. Create a Safety Policy
8. Work With Law Enforcement
9. Create Pre / Post Threat Management Teams
10. Create an Employee Location Plan

## Pre-Incident/Threat Assessment

All reports of threatening or violent conduct should be taken seriously and evaluated. A pre-incident/threat assessment can assist employers in avoiding a domestic violence workplace incident or at the least assist in preparing in the event that an incident does occur. In a domestic violence situation, it is important to evaluate the threat in light of the history of the relationship. Unlike other forms of workplace violence, the target, or victim of domestic violence, can often provide substantial information regarding the batterer. She is likely to be able to predict his reaction to various interventions, as well as his level of dangerousness. It is therefore important to include her in the investigation and evaluation of the threat and to respect her decisions regarding potential interventions.

**It is essential that security personnel do not pass judgment on the conduct of a domestic violence victim and that they do not blame her or hold her responsible for the conduct of the batterer. Similarly, security should not predicate assistance upon a particular course of conduct, e.g., "we will only help you if you leave the relationship."**

### *Reporting and Monitoring*

Security personnel should document each report of domestic violence in the workplace, whether the report is made by the batterer's target or co-worker. Information from any source about workplace violence or threats, no matter how innocuous they may seem, should never be ignored or down-played. All threat/incident reports should be treated as sensitive company documents with limited distribution. Information in the reports should be shared on a "need to know" basis, as inappropriate dissemination of such information may prevent effective planning or response, may impede civil or criminal actions against the perpetrator, or may heighten the victim's danger and violate her right to privacy. An effective workplace domestic violence prevention plan must be non-retaliatory towards the reporting party, and confidential, to the extent that confidentiality is consistent with safety and other legal requirements. Once a report is taken and a security protocol is implemented, Security should monitor the situation for a reasonable time period to determine if there is any escalation, or resolution. ***A reasonable period for routine monitoring may be one to three months.***

### *Threat Assessment*

All reports of threatening or harassing behavior must be evaluated or assessed by competent personnel to determine the extent of risk to the individual and the organization. The opinions of the victim must be included in this assessment, as she is most likely the one person who best knows the thinking and tactics of the perpetrator. In some cases, a few precautions beyond those already in place will be sufficient. In others, a higher level of assessment and planning is required. Each case is different, and responses must be tailored to the circumstances.

## Confidential Domestic Violence Threat/Incident Report

### Sample

1. Name, address and telephone number(s) of the victim and her work location:
2. Name of the person making the report (if different):
3. Name, address and telephone number(s) of the perpetrator:
4. Relationship of the perpetrator to the organization (if any):
5. Relationship of the perpetrator to the victim:
6. Perpetrator's physical description (include photograph if available)
7. Brief history of the perpetrator's and victim's relationship:
8. First report, or prior reports on file?
9. When and where the threat incident occurred:

### Threat of Violence or Harassment (No Physical Assault or Injury)

10. The specific language of the threat:
11. Any physical conduct that would substantiate an intention to follow through with threat:
12. How often and under what circumstances have the threats been made?
13. Have threats been made while the victim is at work? How?

### Incident of Violence or Harassment (With or Without Physical Injury)

14. Describe the incident:
15. Location and time of incident:
16. How the perpetrator appeared during the incident (physically and emotionally):
17. What happened immediately prior to the incident?
18. How the incident started:
19. What happened during the incident?
20. How the incident ended:
21. What happened to the perpetrator after the incident?
22. Names and phone numbers of the incident:
23. Names and phone numbers of police called to the scene:

### Follow-Up

24. Name, title, and phone number of person taking report. Date of report:
25. What follow up measures in particular were taken:

## Threat Management

### *Security Consulting with the Individual*

Once a threat has been identified, documented, and reviewed, it will usually be appropriate to **consult with the victim about her personal safety**. Security experts, with the assistance of local law enforcement and domestic violence programs, can provide victims with advice and recommendations regarding issues such as:

- Navigating the criminal justice system
- Assistance in obtaining a Temporary Restraining Order
- Finding an attorney for personal representation
- Dealing with telephone or mail harassment
- Safety when entering or leaving the worksite
- Use of technology to increase safety
- What to do if confronted in the workplace by the perpetrator
- What to do if the victim sees the perpetrator trying to enter the workplace

**Developing a safety plan for the domestic violence victim is an essential element of threat management**, one which includes and respects the views and preferences of the affected employee. **Contact your local battered women's clinic for a personalized comprehensive safety plan.**

### *Securing the Work Area*

In addition to a personal safety plan, management in the organization need to review the general security precautions that are in place, the physical layout of the worksite, and the need to prepare for the possibility of an on-sight incident.

### *Working with Local Law Enforcement*

In many cases, it will be appropriate to contact local law enforcement agencies when employees report threats of domestic violence or harassment to security and there is reasonable risk that an incident of violence may occur at the workplace. Local police have information that may be helpful in assessing the level of threat against the employee while she is at work; they may have dealt with the perpetrator in the past. It is also helpful for the police to know the potential need for police intervention at your worksite. **It is important to inform the victim that the police have been notified**, and if possible to obtain the victim's consent beforehand.



## Workplace Safety Plan

- ☐ Provide a picture of the batterer to reception areas and/or Security.
- ☐ Identify a contact person for the employee. If this person is unavailable, identify an emergency contact person.
- ☐ Review the safety of the employee's parking arrangements. Make changes accordingly.
- ☐ Have Security escort employee to and from her/his car or public transportation.
- ☐ Change and/or have unpredictable rotations of the employee's work schedule, work site, or work assignment if such change is possible.
- ☐ Have employee's telephone calls screened at work.
- ☐ Install additional security measures for the employee's work site (includes security cameras, silent alarms, etc.)
- ☐ Review the safety of the employee's child care arrangements (whether it is on-site childcare at the company or off-site). If the employee has an order of protection, it can usually be extended to the childcare center.
- ☐ Consider relocating the employee's workstation.
- ☐ If the employee has obtained an order of protection, the workplace should also be included on the order.

## Conclusion

Clearly, domestic violence is a complex social problem that does not exist in a vacuum. As employers and employees take steps to address the issue, the concurrent efforts must take place in the rest of society---from the courthouse to the statehouse, hospitals to schools, police stations and media outlets, neighborhood by neighborhood. Domestic violence is deeply embedded in our culture and nothing short of a dramatic culture shift in values and priorities will make it go away.

This is no easy feat, and yet it is happening, all across the country. Laws are being passed and judges and police departments are enforcing them. Emergency room and other health care professionals are getting excessive training on responding to domestic violence as a preventable health problem. Newspapers no longer cover domestic violence deaths as "lover's quarrels", but as violent outcomes of a crime with epidemic proportions.

While the workplace was once a place where personal lives were a taboo subject and considered irrelevant to the bottom line, employers now recognize that addressing issues that have an impact on the lives and safety of their workers makes good business sense. Services exist today—human resource departments, counseling programs, benefits packages, security services and more—that provide a pre-existing structure for the workplace to easily and effectively respond to domestic violence as it affects employees.

The idea of social responsibility is also increasingly part of the workplace. Partnerships—financial, volunteer and educational—with organizations in the community can enrich both the employer and the communities in which they are based.

Domestic violence is a solvable problem. Each one of us can take small steps by educating our peers and ourselves, and ensuring that domestic violence is never tolerated, never excused. It's good for employers, it's good for employees, and it's good for us all.

## Local Resources

### Louisiana Department of Justice (LADOJ)

PO Box 94005 \* Baton Rouge, LA \* 70804

225.326.6446 \* fax 225.326.6497 \* Toll Free 800.273.5718

website [www.ladoj.ag.state.la.us/](http://www.ladoj.ag.state.la.us/)

Email: [dahmert@ag.state.la.us](mailto:dahmert@ag.state.la.us)

### Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence (LCADV)

PO Box 77308 \* Baton Rouge, LA \* 70879-7308

225.752.1296 \* fax 225.751.8927 \*

website [www.lcadv.org](http://www.lcadv.org)

State Hotline: 1.888.411.1333

### Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault (LaFASA)

PO Box 40 \* Independence, LA \* 70443

985.345.5995 \* fax 985. 345.5592 \* Toll Free: 888. 995.7273

Website: [www.lafasa.org](http://www.lafasa.org)

Email: [lafasa@l-55.com](mailto:lafasa@l-55.com)

### Louisiana Protective Order Registry

Office of the Judicial Administrator, Supreme Court of Louisiana

15555 poydras Street, Suite 1550 \* New Orleans, LA \* 70112-3792

504.568.5749 \* fax 504-568-5739

Website: [www.lapor.org](http://www.lapor.org)

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